

PERSONAL STATEMENT

HILFI ALKAFF

COMPUTER SCIENCE PH.D. APPLICANT

Through my journey I have learned to not only value education, but I have also come to understand exactly what it is that I wish to do with my life. I want to contribute to the academic research community, undergraduate education and to the general society, especially the developing countries, as a professor.

Growing up in one of the developing country, Indonesia, there are many societal problems that persist. For instance, the educational system at all levels is highly disorganized. During my middle school years, I remembered how memorization of formulas is sufficient to excel in scientific subjects such as Mathematics and Physics. This exasperates me to no end as in the aforementioned subjects, an understanding of *why* does the formula work should be the quintessence. I came to understand that even in higher-level education, this problem still persists. By this point, I knew that I would like to improve the quality of education in Indonesia.

Since both of my parents are university lecturers in the Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS) department, I have been exposed to computers and programming early in my life. Slowly, I understand the potential of computers in helping to eradicate several of the problems that exist in Indonesia. For instance, even until now, networking infrastructures have not been established properly throughout Indonesia, especially in the rural areas. This makes it challenging for me to stay connected with my relatives since they are spread throughout the country. Hence, majoring in computer science will equip me with the necessary knowledge to ameliorate my home country and developing countries in general.

United States has been one of the leading countries both in the field of education and computer science. Thus, I enrolled in UC Berkeley at fall 2009 and I became immediately acquainted with academic research. I realized how much dedicated researchers backed by an outstanding institution can accomplish. After surveying several research projects, I believe that the area of computer systems is the most applicable for my purpose. I decided to undertake an operating system research with the Parallel Computing Lab (ParLab) under Professor John Kubiawicz during fall 2010 and have been involved with the project ever since.

In Berkeley, I continued to be involved with education when I joined the HKN EECS honor society in spring 2010. Along with the other members, I held tutoring hours for the undergraduates for three semesters. In fall 2010, I served as a teaching assistant for upper division operating systems class. Given the opportunity to lead discussions in class have further refined both my teaching skills and my understanding of the subject.

My experiences and my home country have come to serve as a motivating factor in my life. Pursuing a graduate degree gives me not only the opportunity to conduct research that

I am very passionate about, but also help students learn and succeed and the society in general. I have found my path in life, and I am pursuing it.